Urban Sanitary District of Sandwich

27th February 1901

Annual Report of the Year 1900

Gentleman

I now beg to present you with the Annual Public Health Report for the year ending 31st Dec: 1900. The Urban District extends over an area of 756 acres, which comprises four Parishes with a population of 2794 according to the Census of 1891 - but I believe at the present time the number has somewhat increased, altho' for the purposes of this Report the number 2794 is adhered to when calculating per centages &c. The total number of deaths during the year was 45, two of these were the result of accident - one being a non-resident (a Volunteer Officer attending an Artillery Camp) who was unfortunately thrown from his horse. and killed in the Town - the other, a resident, being drowned in the river. 43 deaths therefore were due to disease which gives a death rate of 15·3 per thousand - as compared with 17·8 in 1899.

The deaths were distributed among the Parishes as follows - St. Clement 12, St. Peter 14. St. Mary 15, St. Bartholomew 4.

As regards time - 16 occurred during the first quarter of the year - 10 in the second - 7 in the third - 12 in the fourth, the chief mortality was therefore in the first quarter, as was the case in the year 1899.

The number of deaths during the past five years is as follows

During year 1896 — 38 deaths
1897 — 45
1898 — 45
1899 — 52
1900 — 45

The number of births during the year is 77 as was also the case in 1898 and 1899 - As regards sex - 35 are males & 42 females which curiously enough also exactly corresponds with the proportion of males and females given last year - The birthrate for 1900 was 27·5 per thousand.

The number of births during the last five years was as follows -

1896 — 87
1897 — 78
1898 — 77
1899 — 77
1900 — 77

The following is the summary of deaths extracted from the Registrar's Report for 1900

Senile Degeneration	7
Bronchitis	2
Cancer	4
Influenza	4
Chronic Hepatitis	1
Phthisis	5
General Tuberculosis	2
Meningitis	1
Heart Disease	3
Anoemia	1

No. brought forward	30
Nephritis	1
Diarrhœa	3
Pneumonia	2
Marasmus	1
Acute Gastritis	1
Pyœmia	1
Premature birth	2
Weakness from birth	1
Cirrhosis of liver	1
Accidental	2
	45

The two accidental deaths were the subject of a Coroner's Enquiry - One was the lamentable death of an Officer of Volunteer Artillery who was attending a Camp of Instruction in this vicinity - he was thrown from a runaway horse while passing through the town - The other was a boy who fell into the river while at play and was drowned.

The number of deaths under 12 months was 7 a progressive improvement on the years 1898 - 1899 but still too high a proportion - the causes were Diarrhœa 3, Premature birth 2, Dentition Convulsions 2.

Sixteen cases of notifiable Infectious Diseases were registered - Diphtheria 2, Enteric 3, Erysipelas 4, Scarlet fever 7. The cases of Diphtheria were in different Parishes and occurred in July & October. Inspection & enquiry failed to discover any probable cause in one case, but in the other a considerable quantity of town refuse had been collected on the land adjacent to the cottage & I think it quite probable that the child may have become

infected from that source. Of the three cases of Enteric - one occurred near the river in a dwelling at times infested by rats, all kinds of refuse was found under the flooring &c. which no doubt had been brought up from the river banks &c and partially devoured by these animals. Another case was supposed to have originated as the effect of an insecurely trapped drain which was discovered & in the proximity of which the infected person was constantly at work. In the third case no cause could be assigned. The Scarlet-fever cases occurred in five households in different Parishes during the months of January, April, July & December. All the cases were of mild type - in one instance the child probably contracted it while away from the town on a visit - in the other cases no known source was discoverable. I should perhaps have noted the fact that the two cases of Diphtheria were of mild type compared with the cases of the previous year, when six proved fatal, & secondary paralytic effects followed in many cases - It will be observed from the above description that no deaths occurred from Zymotic disease during the twelve months. Epidemic Influenza was very general during the months of January & February and caused a great amount of sickness, with prolonged exhausting effects in some cases, but on the whole it appeared in a somewhat attenuated form and it only rarely manifested itself during the remainder of the year - It was responsible for four deaths - two in those of middle age (45 & 38) and two in the aged (72 & 73)

An extract from the Registrar's Report of deaths for the year shows that seven persons died from old age, four of these were 80 or over - the oldest being 90.

I am glad to report upon the great improvement during the past year - namely - the repavement in the various streets which has added much to the cleanliness besides removing a frequent source of dampness to the outside foundation walls of many houses adjacent to the old pavement in its damaged and worn condition.

Dairies and Cowsheds were inspected during the year and at all times found in a satisfactory condition - no disease being present. No doubt however a Compulsory notification of Cows suffering from any form of tubercular disease would be a wise and precautionary measure, as would also the insertion of Phthisis in the list of prescribed diseases in man at present compelled to be notified within the Boro'.

No doubt also a new and complete System of drainage would be a great Sanitary improvement to the Town, when the Authority is in a position to consider and meet the expense of the same.

The Street Scavenging &c during the year was not altogether satisfactory, but a fresh contract is now undertaken by which the night soil &c is to be collected weekly, and house refuse &c twice a week - a new locality for its storage has also been fixed upon at a safe distance from all habitation - The various Slaughter-houses were inspected during the year and cause of complaint in one only was found

-the non-removal of some refuse which had accumulated.

All the lodging-houses were also visited; no overcrowding was reported - a defective cesspool in one was noted, which is now to be filled up as the entire premises are to be rebuilt -

The supply of water from the Public Water works appears to be ample and the quality, as demonstrated by the Public Analyst is satisfactory. The water is now almost in general use in both the Urban and immediate Rural districts.

I am glad to be able to state that the isolated wards for Infectious Diseases erected by the Guardians of the Eastry Union &c are approaching completion, and I trust that in my next Report I may be able to say that some definite arrangement has been made between the Guardians and Urban Authority to receive suitable cases from the Borough.

I am Sir
Yours obediently
A. Thomson.